

SENATE BILL 2642

By Yarbro

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4 and Title 49, to enact the "Tennessee Exemplary Educator Academy Act".

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 1, is amended by adding Sections 2 through 6 as a new part.

SECTION 2. This part shall be known and may be cited as the "Tennessee Exemplary Educator Academy Act".

SECTION 3. The general assembly finds that with states serving as "laboratories of democracy," with the devolution of education powers to the states from the leadership of United States Senators Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray, and with passage of the "Every Student Succeeds Act," the academy established in this part for exemplary educators is necessary to enable outstanding Tennessee teachers to directly participate in Tennessee state education policy and assessments.

SECTION 4. Upon recommendation of the principal or director of an LEA, or joint recommendation of the principal and director of an LEA, and upon approval by a majority vote of the local school board, exemplary public school educators from all LEAs in this state shall be selected to receive a scholarship or similar monetary benefit and to participate in the Tennessee Exemplary Educator Academy established by Section 5 of this act. Educators who have shown exemplary service to this great state in the classroom for teaching the future citizens of this great state, and who are the most prized assets and most important investments, shall be eligible for selection under this section.

SECTION 5.

(a) There is created an annual event to be known as the Tennessee Exemplary Educator Academy, or "the academy," that shall take place in Nashville and at which educators selected to attend shall have the opportunity to meet with members of the general assembly, the governor, the commissioner of education, and officials from the state department of education.

(b) The academy shall serve as an integral stakeholder event that provides an opportunity for exemplary educators to:

(1) Submit constructive feedback to policymakers;

(2) Submit sample assessment question items to be used in Tennessee state assessments; and

(3) Share best practices in a professional learning community setting facilitated by the state department of education, Tennessee School Boards Association, Tennessee Education Association, Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS), and Professional Educators of Tennessee.

(c) The academy shall be a minimum of two (2) days with overnight accommodations and a generous scholarship or similar monetary benefit provided to each exemplary educator selected for the academy.

(d) Each LEA and school district shall send at least two (2) exemplary educators to the academy. The academy shall be held in January 2017, and in the month of January in subsequent years, during the annual session of the general assembly.

SECTION 6. Subject to appropriations being made in the general appropriations act, an amount equal to one-tenth (1/10) of the state's assessment budget shall fund the academy annually with up to one percent (1%) of Tennessee's total public school educators participating each year; provided, that any remaining spots available to satisfy one percent (1%) of the public school teachers in the state shall be proportional to the student populations of the LEAs across the state.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.